

*The Finnish Board of
Inter-Country Adoption Affairs
Annual Report 2005*

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Inter-Country Adoption Affairs

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Title of publication The Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs. Annual Report 2005			
Summary The Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs (Finnish Adoption Board) is the expert body in inter-country adoption affairs in Finland. It is subordinated to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Board celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2005. The Board has been in force since 1 July 1997 as the central authority meant in the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention). A follow-up meeting for the Convention, attended by the Board representatives, was arranged in Hague in 2005. In quantitative terms, granting permissions for inter-country adoption is the most significant task of the Board. In recent years, inter-country adoption has become increasingly popular. In 2005 the Board handled 275 permission applications. During 2005 the Board received reports of altogether 308 arrivals of adoptive children in Finland. Most adoptive children have come to Finland from China, Thailand, Russia and South Africa. The Board had 24 meetings in 2005. 10 of them were meetings of the full composition and 14 of the limited composition. The Board issues expert opinions for example to the courts of justice. In 2005 the Board issued three expert opinions to the Helsinki Court of Appeal. The Board also approves the Finnish service providers' international co-operation bodies. In 2005 the Board approved five applications by a Finnish service provider concerning co-operation with a foreign service provider. In 2005 the Board submitted two initiatives to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health concerning inter-country adoption affairs. In 2005 it was Finland's turn to arrange the meeting of Nordic adoption authorities. The meeting was held on 20 October 2005. The Board also took part in the organisation of a jubilee seminar on adoption affairs held at Finlandia Hall on 21 October 2005.			
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KUVAILULEHTI

Julkaisija Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö		Julkaisun päivämäärä 30.10.2006	
Tekijät (toimielimestä: toimielimen nimi, puheenjohtaja, sihteeri) Suomen kansainvälisten lapseksiottamisasioiden lautakunta Puheenjohtaja: Anne Kumpula / Virpi Kölhi Sihteeri: Kaarina Koskela Tilastot: Vappu Kananen		Julkaisun laji Toimintakertomus	
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Julkaisun nimi Suomen kansainvälisten lapseksiottamisasioiden lautakunta. Toimintakertomus 2005 (Nämnden för internationella adoptionsärenden i Finland. Verksamhetsberättelse 2005)			
Tiivistelmä Suomen kansainvälisten lapseksiottamisasioiden lautakunta on sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön alainen kansainvälisten lapseksiottamisasioiden asiantuntijaviranomainen. Vuonna 2005 lautakunta täytti 20 vuotta. Lautakunta on toiminut 1.7.1997 lähtien lastensuojelua ja yhteistyötä kansainvälisissä lapseksiottamisasioissa koskevassa yleissopimuksessa (Haagin sopimus) tarkoitettuna keskusviranomaisena. Vuonna 2005 järjestettiin sopimuksen seurantakokous Haagissa, johon lautakunnan edustajat osallistuivat. Kansainväliseen lapseksiottamiseen tarvittavien lupien myöntäminen on määrällisesti lautakunnan merkittävin tehtävä. Viime vuosina kansainvälisen lapseksiottamisen suosio on entisestään lisääntynyt. Vuonna 2005 lautakunta käsitteli 275 lupahakemusta. Lautakunnalle tehtiin vuoden 2005 aikana ilmoitus yhteensä 308 Suomeen saapuneesta lapsesta. Eniten lapsia adoptoitiin Kiinasta, Thaimaasta, Venäjältä ja Etelä-Afrikasta. Vuoden 2005 aikana lautakunta piti 24 kokousta. Näistä 10 oli täyden kokoonpanon ja 14 suppean kokoonpanon kokouksia. Lautakunta antaa asiantuntijalausuntoja muun muassa tuomioistuimille. Vuonna 2005 lautakunta antoi kolme asiantuntijalausuntoa Helsingin hovioikeudelle. Lautakunta myös hyväksyy suomalaisten palvelunantajien ulkomaiset yhteistyötahot. Vuoden 2005 aikana lautakunta hyväksyi viisi suomalaisen palvelunantajan hakemusta yhteistyöstä ulkomaisen palvelunantajan kanssa. Toimintavuoden aikana lautakunta teki kaksi aloitetta sosiaali- ja terveysministeriölle kansainväliseen adoptiotoimintaan liittyen. Vuonna 2005 oli Suomen vuoro järjestää pohjoismaisten adoptioviranomaisten kokous. Kokous pidettiin 20.10.2005. Lautakunta oli myös mukana järjestämässä adoptioaiheista juhlaseminaaria 21.10.2005 Finlandia-talolla.			
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PRESENTATIONSBLAD

Utgivare Social- och hälsovårdsministeriet		Utgivningsdatum 30.10.2006	
Författare (Uppgifter om organet: namn, ordförande, sekreterare) Nämnden för internationella adoptionsärenden i Finland Ordförande: Anne Kumpula / Virpi Kõlhi Sekreterare: Kaarina Koskela Statistik: Vappu Kananen		Typ av publikation Verksamhetsberättelse	
		Uppdragsgivare Statsrådet	
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Referat <p>Nämnden för internationella adoptionsärenden i Finland, som är underställd social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, fungerar som särskild sakkunnigmyndighet i internationella adoptionsärenden. År 2005 fyllde nämnden 20 år. Nämnden har verkat sedan 1.7.1997 som en central myndighet i internationella adoptionsärenden i enlighet med vad som avses i konventionen om skydd av barn och samarbete vid internationella adoptioner (Haagkonventionen). År 2005 organiserades ett uppföljningsmöte i Haag som deltog av nämndens representanter.</p> <p>Beviljande av tillstånd för internationell adoption är kvantitativt sett nämndens främsta uppgift. Under senare år har intresset för internationella adoptioner blivit större än förut. Under år 2005 behandlade nämnden 275 tillståndsansökningar. Under år 2005 mottog nämnden 308 anmälningar om barn som anlänt till Finland. De flesta av dessa barn kom från Kina, Thailand, Ryssland och Sydafrika.</p> <p>Under år 2005 höll nämnden 24 möten. 10 av mötena hade full sammansättning och 14 inskränkt sammansättning.</p> <p>Nämnden avger sakkunnigutlåtanden till bland annat domstolar. År 2005 gav nämnden tre sakkunnigutlåtanden till Helsingfors hovrätt. Nämnden godkänner också de finländska adoptionstjänstorganens utländska samarbetspartners. Under år 2005 godkände nämnden fem ansökningar från ett finländskt adoptionstjänstorgan om rätt att samarbeta med ett utländskt adoptionstjänstorgan.</p> <p>Under verksamhetsåret gav nämnden två initiativ till social- och hälsovårdsministeriet avseende den internationella adoptionsverksamheten.</p> <p>År 2005 var det Finlands tur att organisera det nordiska mötet av adoptivmyndigheter. Mötet hölls 20.10.2005. Nämnden deltog även i organiseringen av ett jubileumsseminarium avseende adoptionsärenden 21.10.2005 i Finlandia-huset.</p>			
Nyckelord Adoption, adoptivbarn, adoptivföräldrar, verksamhetsberättelser			
Övriga uppgifter www.stm.fi Verksamhetsberättelsen ges ut även på finska och svenska.			
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1 General facts about inter-country adoption

In Finland, the provisions regulating adoption and the relations between adoptive children and their parents are included in the Adoption Act (153/1985) and in the Adoption Decree (508/1997). Further provisions on inter-country adoption are contained in the Decree on the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs (509/1997) and in the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (the Hague Convention). Finland acceded to the Hague Convention in 1997.

The general planning, steering and supervision of the inter-country adoption service is the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The expert body in inter-country adoption matters is the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs (the Finnish Adoption Board), which is subordinated to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The Board is the central authority referred to in Article 6, paragraph 1, of the Hague Convention.

Practical tasks relating to inter-country child adoption are attended to by the inter-country adoption service providers. Finnish legislation on adoption requires the use of a child adoption service. The service providers, which have a licence granted by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to act as service providers for inter-country adoption, are the City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board, Interpedia and Save the Children.

In 2005 there were 2,906 children in Finland who had arrived via inter-country adoption. They have been adopted under the terms of the Adoption Act, which entered into force in 1985. In some cases the adoption of children takes place in a foreign state, in accordance with that country's legislation, without permission granted by the Finnish Adoption Board. In such cases the Helsinki Court of Appeal can recognise the validity of the adoption in Finland. Most adoptive children have come to Finland from Russia, China, Thailand, Colombia and Ethiopia.

Foreign children have been adopted to Finland since the 1970s. The number of children coming to Finland continues to be small in comparison with many other countries receiving children. For example in Norway, 707 children under 18 years of age were adopted from abroad in 2005, and in recent years in Sweden, over thousand children have been adopted from abroad annually. In recent years the popularity of inter-country adoption has, however, grown also in Finland, and the number of foreign adoptive children arriving in Finland has increased. In 2005, 308 children arrived in Finland via inter-country adoption. The number is higher than ever before.

2 Composition of the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs

Provisions on the composition, appointment and tasks of the Finnish Adoption Board are laid down by Decree (509/1997). The Board has a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and the necessary number of other members. The last-mentioned members have a personal deputy each.

Representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health act as the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the Board. Of the other members, at least one must represent the Ministry for

Foreign Affairs, one the Ministry of Justice, one the Directorate of Immigration, one the expertise in municipal child welfare work and one expertise in social sector research and development, in addition to which one member is appointed by each licensed service provider. The Government appoints the Board for a five-year term. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health appoints a secretary for the Board.

Composition of the Finnish Adoption Board in 1 January 2005 – 30 April 2005:

Chairperson	Ms Anne Kumpula , Senior Officer, Legal Affairs From 1 March 2005: Ms Virpi Kölhi , Lawyer Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Vice-chairperson	Mr Kari Ilmonen , Ministerial Adviser Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Members (Deputy members)	Ms Désirée Söderlund , Legislative Counsellor (Mr Antti Leinonen , Legislative Counsellor) Ministry of Justice Ms Hanna Rantala , Legislative Secretary (Ms Minna-Kaisa Liukko , Legislative Secretary) Ministry for Foreign Affairs Mr Hannu Kantola , Family Therapist City of Hämeenlinna (Mr Esa Eriksson , Development Chief, National Research and Development Centre for Social Welfare and Health) Social sector research and development expertise Mr Arto Summanen , Child Welfare Officer Municipality of Nurmijärvi (Mr Tuomo Kivelä , Lawyer City of Espoo) Municipal child welfare work expertise Mr Heikki Taskinen , Director (Ms Arja Kallakivi , Head of Unit) Directorate of Immigration Mr Sakari Lankinen , Ministerial Counsellor, Health/Medical Affairs (Mr Risto Pomoell , Ministerial Counsellor, Health/Medical Affairs) Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Mr Jari Meklin , Adoption Co-ordinator (Ms Aulikki Haimi-Kaikkonen , Chief Social Welfare Worker) City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board Ms Tuula Kumpumäki , Chief of Inter-Country Adoption Service (Ms Marja Miikkulainen , Development Chief) Save the Children

Ms **Tarja Monto**, Executive Director
 (Ms **Päivi Penttilä**, Adoption Officer)
 Interpedia

The term of the Board ended on 30 April 2005. On 28 April 2005, the Government appointed a new Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs. The term of the new Board lasts from 1 May 2005 to 30 April 2010.

Composition of the Finnish Adoption Board in 1 May 2005 – 31 December 2005:

Chairperson	Ms Virpi Kölhi , Lawyer Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Vice-chairperson	Mr Kari Ilmonen , Ministerial Adviser Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
Members (Deputy members)	Ms Désirée Söderlund , Special Expert (Mr Tuomo Antila , Legislative Counsellor) Ministry of Justice
	Ms Hanna Rantala , Legislative Secretary (Ms Minna-Kaisa Liukko , Legislative Secretary) Ministry for Foreign Affairs
	Ms Marja Pajukoski , Lawyer National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (Mr Esa Eriksson , Development Chief, National Research and Development Centre for Social Welfare and Health) Social sector research and development expertise
	Mr Tapani Unkila , Chief Social Welfare Worker, City of Tampere (Mr Olli-Pekka Alapiessa , Director of Social Work, City of Vantaa) Municipal child welfare work expertise
	Mr Jarmo Tiukkanen , Senior Officer (Ms Arja Kallakivi , Head of Unit) Directorate of Immigration
	Mr Risto Pomoell , Ministerial Counsellor, Health/Medical Affairs (Mr Sakari Lankinen , Ministerial Counsellor, Health/Medical Affairs) Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
	Mr Jari Meklin , Adoption Co-ordinator (Ms Aulikki Haimi-Kaikkonen , Chief Social Welfare Worker) City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board
	Ms Tuula Kumpumäki , Chief of Inter-Country Adoption Service (Ms Marja Miikkulainen , Development Chief) Save the Children

Ms **Tarja Monto**, Executive Director
 (Ms **Anja Ojuva**, Chief of Adoption Service)
 Interpedia

Ms **Kaarina Koskela**, Senior Officer, has acted the secretary for the Board in 2005.

3 Activities of the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs

According to the Decree on the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs (509/1997), the tasks of the Board are as follows:

- to grant applicants the permission for inter-country child adoption;
- to approve the foreign co-operation partners (foreign service providers) of Finnish service providers;
- to maintain a file on the child adoption legislation of foreign states;
- to issue expert opinions;
- to make initiatives on the development of inter-country child adoption activity;
- to monitor international development in inter-country adoption affairs;
- to monitor the way in which the Hague Convention is complied with in Finland and, if necessary, to set about measures to produce conformity with it;
- to cooperate with the central authorities of states parties to the Hague Convention in order to achieve the objectives of the Convention and to exchange information referred to in the Convention;
- to attend to the tasks of the central authority under the Hague Convention which have not been assigned to another body by a law, decree or decision of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Since 1 July 1997, the Finnish Adoption Board has been the central authority meant in the Hague Convention. Among the co-operation states of Finnish service providers, the Convention has been ratified by South Africa, the Philippines, India, China, Colombia, Poland, Thailand and Estonia. A list of the states, which have acceded to the Hague Convention, is attached (Appendix 3).

The Adoption Board had 24 meetings in 2005. 10 of them were meetings of the full composition and the remaining 14 were meetings of the limited composition. The limited composition includes, in addition to the chairperson, the member representing expertise in social sector research and development and the member representing expertise in municipal child welfare work. The competence of the limited composition includes dealing with the permissions to be granted for inter-country adoption.

In quantitative terms, granting permissions for inter-country adoption is the most significant task of the Board. In 2005 the Board handled 275 permission applications. Two permission applications and two applications for extension of permission were withdrawn. 23 supplemental reports regarding the applications were requested. Six actual applications were rejected during the year of operation.

The permission applications are forwarded to the Board through service providers. In regard to 125 applications the service provider was Save the Children, in 114 applications Interpedia and in 36 applications the City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board. During the year, five notifications of change of service provider were made to the Board.

The Board made its decision on 134 applications within one month from their receipt. The processing of 86 applications took more than one month but less than two months. The processing of 42 applications and the decision-making concerning them took more than two months but less than three months and 13 applications more than three months. The processing was prolonged, *inter alia*, by the requested supplemental reports.

During the past year the Board received reports of altogether 308 arrivals of adoptive children in Finland. Altogether 140 children were adopted from China and 42 from Thailand. Next most children came from Russia (35), South Africa (27) and Colombia (20). More detailed statistical data on the children arriving in Finland and on the permission applications are attached (Appendix 1).

The Board gave three expert opinions to the Helsinki Court of Appeal for the recognition of adoption that had taken place in a foreign state.

In 2005, all three Finnish service providers applied for a continued permission from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to provide inter-country adoption service. The Board submitted the opinions concerning the service providers' applications to the Ministry. The Board did not receive any requests for opinions concerning new service providers. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health granted a continued permission to all the service providers.

During the year 2005, the Board dealt with and accepted five Finnish service providers' applications for co-operation with foreign service providers. All of the applications concerned license to continue the already existing co-operation. No new contacts were established. A list of the foreign co-operation partners of the Finnish service providers is enclosed (Appendix 2).

On 28 February 2005, the Board submitted an initiative to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health concerning the revision of Section 3 of the Government Decree on Maternal Allowance and Adoption Support (885/2002). In its initiative, the Board proposed that the amount of the adoption support would be adjusted for some countries.

Chairperson Virpi Kõlhi and Secretary Kaarina Koskela attended the annual working meeting of European central authorities in Berlin, Germany on 17–20 March 2005. In the meeting, for example issues relating to the health of adopted children were discussed and experiences concerning co-operation in adoption affairs with different countries were exchanged. In 2006 the meeting will take place in Switzerland.

On 16 August 2005, the Board submitted a proposition to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health stating that the Ministry and the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health should consider the lack of research on adoptions in their performance target negotiations.

On 17–23 September 2005, the Second Special Commission meeting on the 1993 Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention was organised. The Finnish representatives in the meeting were Tuomo Antila, Kaarina Koskela and Virpi Kõlhi. In the meeting the draft "Guide to Good Practice" concerning the steering of application practices regarding the Hague

Convention was reviewed for example. A broad-based working group was appointed for the further work on the draft. The Nordic representatives in the group are Norway and the Nordic Adoption Council. Denmark had compiled a model form for assessing the health of the child for the meeting, and it was seconded by the rest of the Nordic countries. Estonia declared that it will prepare a model form concerning follow-up reports in co-operation with certain other states and invited Finland to take part in the preparations. Follow-up reports were, indeed, the subject of lively debate in the meeting. The documents of the Special Commission meeting are available on the webpages of the Hague Conference on Private International Law at www.hcch.net. The next Special Commission meeting is scheduled to take place in four years time.

On 19 October 2005, Chairperson Virpi K  lhi and Secretary Kaarina Koskela together with Marika Elmeranta and Marjo Hannu-Jama from Interpedia met with Yehualawerk Eshete and Bekele Siamiregne from Interpedia's Ethiopian co-operation contact. The meeting was also attended by Tedla Deressie, Director of Interpedia country office in Ethiopia.

In 2005 it was the turn of the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs to arrange the meeting of Nordic adoption authorities. The meeting took place in Finlandia Hall on 20 October 2005. The meeting was attended by 15 persons. In the meeting issues concerning the age of adoption applicants and the costs of adoption among other things were discussed. A particular concern was also the obscurities that have arisen in Vietnam and India concerning adoption of children. The meeting decided that Denmark takes action to examine the issue and notifies the other Nordic countries of the developments.

The year 2005 was the 20th anniversary of the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs and the Adoption Act (153/1985). In 1985, for the first time, inter-country adoption was enacted in the law. Because of that, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs, all the Finnish inter-country adoption service providers (City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board, Interpedia and Save the Children) as well as the Adoption Families Association, the All Our Children Association and the Adoption Counsellor organised a jubilee seminar discussing the history and the present of inter-country adoption in Finlandia Hall on 21 October 2005. Experts from Finland, Sweden and Denmark spoke at the seminar. The seminar was attended by over 200 persons, including representatives of the Finnish service providers' co-operation contacts abroad.

On 25 October 2005, representatives of the co-operation contacts of Save the Children in Thailand and the Philippines visited the Board. The guests were Pat Amasiri, Adoption Co-ordinator from Holt Sahathai Foundation in Thailand as well as Josefina Tolentino, Consultant, and Elizabeth Ercilla, Social Worker from the central authority in the Philippines. In the meeting, Sirpa Hietaranta represented Save the Children and Kaarina Koskela and Virpi K  lhi represented the Board.

The Secretary of the Board participated in meetings of the adoption network during the year 2005. On 14 December 2005, the Board organised a meeting at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

The Board's Internet pages are found at www.stm.fi under the heading of Neuvottelukunnat. The pages give information about the Board, service providers and inter-country adoption in general and the Board's meeting schedule.

28.9.2006

APPENDIX 1

STATISTICAL DATA ON CHILDREN ARRIVING IN FINLAND IN 2005**Number of children, country of origin, sex, service provider**

Country	Save the Children			Interpedia			City of Helsinki SWB			Children in total
	Girl	Boy	Total	Girl	Boy	Total	Girl	Boy	Total	
China	69	2	71	66	3	69				140
Colombia				9	6	15	1	4	5	20
Estonia							1	2	3	3
Ethiopia				4	1	5				5
India				8	7	15				15
Philippines	4	15	19							19
Poland		2	2							2
Russia	16	19	35							35
South Africa				7	2	9	2	16	18	27
Thailand	5	6	11	9	14	23		8	8	42
Total	94	44	138	103	33	136	4	30	34	308

Children's age, sex, service provider

Age	Save the Children			Interpedia			City of Helsinki SWB			Children in total
	Girl	Boy	Total	Girl	Boy	Total	Girl	Boy	Total	
Under 1 year	6	4	10	27	10	37	1	5	6	53
1-year	65	16	81	58	7	65	1	12	13	159
2-years	8	9	17	10	11	21		4	4	42
3-years	5	3	8	2	2	4	1	3	4	16
4-years	4	6	10	1		1		2	2	13
5-years	1	3	4	3	1	4	1		1	9
6-years	4		4	2	1	3				7
7-years	1		1		1	1		2	2	4
8-years		2	2							2
9-years		1	1				1	1	2	3
Total	94	44	138	103	33	136	5	29	34	308

Children's year of birth and country of origin

Year of birth	China	Colombia	Estonia	Ethiopia	India	Philippines	Poland	Russia	South Africa	Thailand	Total
2005	6	4							6	1	17
2004	84	6		3	1	9	1	4	10	9	127
2003	43	1			7	4		4	7	15	81
2002	4	3			4	3	1	8	1	7	31
2001	2	1			1	2		4	3	9	22
2000				1	1			5		1	8
1999		1	1	1		1		5			9
1998		2			1			1			4
1997	1	1	1					3			6
1996											
1995			1					1			2
1994		1									1
Total	140	20	3	5	15	19	2	35	27	42	308

STATISTICAL DATA ON CHILDREN ARRIVING IN FINLAND IN 1985-2005

Year Children		Country of origin	Children
1985	11	China	601
1986	22	Colombia	462
1987	45	Dominican Republic	6
1988	55	Estonia	71
1989	78	Ethiopia	209
1990	54	Guatemala	13
1991	60	India	126
1992	85	Philippines	49
1993	103	Poland	29
1994	127	Romania	34
1995	102	Russia	655
1996	144	South Africa	96
1997	192	Sri Lanka	35
1998	181	Taiwan	1
1999	149	Thailand	476
2000	198	Vietnam	43
2001	218	Total	2 906
2002	246		
2003	239		
2004	289		
2005	308		
Total	2 906		

Sex		Age distribution	Children
Girls	1 527	Under 1 year	716
Boys	1 379	1-year	826
Total	2 906	2-years	462
		3-years	256
		4-years	192
		5-years	158
		6-years or older	296
		Total	2 906

PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS IN THE BOARD IN 2005

Decisions

Contents	Number
Permission granted for one child	143
Permission granted for 1 child or siblings	18
Permission granted for a certain child	2
Permission granted with an age restriction*)	49
Validity of a permission extended	50
Permission refused	6
Other	7
Total	275

*) The child must be born before or after the defined date.

Cancelled applications

	Number
Permission applications	2
Applications for extension of permission	2
Total	4

Processing time in the Board

Time	Number
Under one month	134
1 month - under 2 months	86
2 months - under 3 months	42
3 months or longer	13
Total	275

23 supplemental reports were requested.

Service provider in the decisions

Service provider	Number
Save the Children	125
Interpedia	114
City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board	36
Total	275

STATISTICAL DATA ON APPLICANTS IN 2005

The statistical data on applicants in 2005 does not include applicants, whose permission has been extended or rejected or who have received a decision classified under "Other".

Age of applicants

Age	Number of men	Number of women
25 - 29	10	15
30 - 34	44	49
35 - 39	56	68
40 - 44	56	58
45 - 49	21	20
50 -	7	2
Total	194	212

Sole applicants

Women	13
Men	0
Total	13

Applicant families with no children and families with children

No. of children	None	Biological	Adopted	Both	Foster home	Total
No children	108					108
1 child		29	41		1	71
2 children		10	8	4		22
3 children		7				7
4 or more children		4				4
Total	108	50	49	4	1	212

Residence of applicant families by province in 2005

Province	Families
Southern Finland	92
Western Finland	94
Eastern Finland	11
Oulu	8
Lapland	5
Åland Islands	2
Total	212

STATISTICAL DATA ON APPLICANTS IN 1985-2005

The statistical data on applicants in 2005 does not include applicants, whose permission has been extended or rejected or who have received a decision classified under "Other".

Man's age	1985	1988	1992	1995	1997	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	
											1985-2005	%
25 - 29	1	1	1	3	12	10	8	10	12	10	115	3,6
30 - 34	11	20	19	22	57	49	28	66	73	44	689	21,8
35 - 39	13	32	32	47	62	72	70	103	100	56	1 105	35,0
40 - 44	8	12	26	34	58	59	47	78	103	56	876	27,8
45 - 49	1	3	5	18	19	22	23	33	41	21	301	9,5
50 ->	-	-	1	5	1	7	6	5	6	7	69	2,2
Total	34	68	84	129	209	219	182	295	335	194	3 155	100,0

Woman's age	1985	1988	1992	1995	1997	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	
											1985-2005	%
25 - 29	4	5	2	7	5	13	5	22	23	15	184	5,3
30 - 34	10	25	25	26	52	67	51	85	95	49	875	25,0
35 - 39	19	30	35	57	91	71	82	111	109	68	1 234	35,2
40 - 44	5	15	24	36	62	71	61	99	106	58	933	26,6
45 - 49	-	1	-	16	20	19	21	22	36	20	253	7,2
50 ->	-	-	-	2	-	3	3	3	4	2	25	0,7
Total	38	76	86	144	230	244	223	342	373	212	3 504	100,0

Woman sole applicant (including one male applicant)	1985	1988	1992	1995	1997	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	
											1985-2005	%
	4	8	2	15	21	25	41	49	38	13	345	9,8

Biological children	1985	1988	1992	1995	1997	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	
											1985-2005	%
None	25	63	70	120	196	209	184	273	303	162	2 838	82,3
1	4	5	8	13	24	28	20	47	51	29	367	10,6
2	7	2	3	9	5	7	12	13	14	10	141	4,1
3	1	3	5	1	5	-	3	8	5	7	73	2,1
4 <	1	3	-	1	-	-	4	2	-	4	31	0,9
Total	38	76	86	144	230	244	223	343	373	212	3 450	100,0

Applicant's place of residence by province in 1985-2005

Province	1997	1998	1999	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	
									1985-2005	%
Southern Finland	118	100	140	136	135	182	173	92	1 201	52,4
Western Finland	81	53	89	74	72	121	157	94	829	36,2
Eastern Finland	14	10	14	19	3	23	28	11	136	5,9
Oulu	10	4	13	8	9	14	12	8	87	3,8
Lapland	2	1	2	4	2	2	2	5	21	0,9
Åland Islands	2	-	1	3	2	1	1	2	14	0,6
No address in Finland	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0,1
Total	230	168	259	244	223	343	373	212	2 291	100,0

FOREIGN CO-OPERATION PARTNERS OF THE FINNISH SERVICE PROVIDERS

Foreign service providers which have been approved by the Board and the last day of approval

Save the Children

The Philippines	Inter-Country Adoption Board, 9 May 2011
China	China Center of Adoption Affairs, 5 September 2006
Poland	Public Adoption and Care Center in Warsaw, 31 March 2006
	Children Friends Company – National Adoption – Welfare Center, 14 March 2006
	Catholic Adoption – Welfare Centre, 14 March 2006
Thailand	The Department of Social Development and Welfare, 15 December 2009
	Holt Sahathai Foundation, 9 May 2011
Russia	City of St Petersburg Committee on Education, 5 September 2006
	Leningrad Area Committee on Education, 20 April 2008
	Republic of Karelia, Ministry of Education, 3 June 2009
	Administrative district of Tcheljabinsk, Educational and Science Administration 11 November 2008

City of Helsinki Social Welfare Board

South Africa	Johannesburg Child Welfare Society, 31 October 2010
Colombia	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, 15 May 2010
	Casa de Maria y el Niño, 15 May 2010
	La Casita de Nicolás, 4 December 2006

Thailand Department of Social Development and Welfare, 5 September 2011
Thai Red Cross Children Home, 5 September 2011

Estonia Ministry of Social Welfare of Estonia, 6 June 2007

Interpedia

South Africa Apostolic Faith Mission Executive Welfare
Council/Abba Adoptions, 21 April 2007

Ethiopia Children, Youth and Family Affairs Department,
21 August 2010

India Families for Children (FFC), 18 April 2010
Delhi Council for Child Welfare, 12 October 2009

China China Center of Adoption Affairs, 15 June 2007

Colombia Los Chiquitines, 10 February 2007
Fundación "Los Pisingos", 15 December 2009
Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar,
15 December 2009

Thailand Friends For All Children Foundation, 15 December 2009
Department of Social Development and
Welfare, 15 December 2009

THE HAGUE CONVENTION CONTRACTING STATES 31 AUGUST 2006

The following states have ratified the Convention / acceded to the Convention. A total of 69 contracting states by 31 August 2006.

Albania	1 January 2001	Latvia	1 December 2002
Andorra	1 May 1997	Lithuania	1 August 1998
Australia	1 December 1998	Luxembourg	1 November 2002
Austria	1 September 1999	Madagascar	1 September 2004
Azerbaijan	1 October 2004	Mali	1 September 2006
Belarus	1 November 2003	Malta	1 February 2005
Belgium	1 September 2005	Mauritius	1 January 1999
Belize	1 April 2006	Mexico	1 May 1995
Bolivia	1 July 2002	Moldova	1 August 1998
Brazil	1 July 1999	Monaco	1 October 1999
Bulgaria	1 September 2002	Mongolia	1 August 2000
Burkina Faso	1 May 1996	Netherlands	1 October 1998
Burundi	1 February 1999	New Zealand	1 January 1999
Canada	1 April 1997	Norway	1 January 1998
Chile	1 November 1999	Panama	1 January 2000
China	1 January 2006	Paraguay	1 September 1998
Colombia	1 November 1998	Peru	1 January 1996
Costa Rica	1 February 1996	Philippines	1 November 1996
Cyprus	1 June 1995	Poland	1 October 1995
Czech Republic	1 June 2000	Portugal	1 July 2004
Denmark	1 November 1997	Romania	1 May 1995
Ecuador	1 January 1996	San Marino	1 February 2005
El Salvador	1 March 1999	Slovakia	1 October 2001
Estonia	1 June 2002	Slovenia	1 May 2002
Finland	1 July 1997	South Africa	1 December 2003
France	1 October 1998	Spain	1 November 1995
Georgia	1 August 1999	Sri Lanka	1 May 1995
Germany	1 March 2002	Sweden	1 September 1997
Guatemala	1 March 2003	Switzerland	1 January 2003
Guinea	1 February 2004	Thailand	1 August 2004
Hungary	1 August 2005	Turkey	1 September 2004
Iceland	1 May 2000	United Kingdom	1 June 2003
India	1 October 2003	Uruguay	1 April 2004
Israel	1 June 1999	Venezuela	1 May 1997
Italy	1 May 2000		

Decree

on the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs

(509/1997)

Issued in Helsinki on 30 May 1997

On the submission of the Minister of Justice, the following is enacted on the basis of section 20(3) of the Adoption Act (153/1985) issued on 8 February 1985, as amended by the Act (175/1996) of 22 March 1996:

Section 1

The task of the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs (*the Finnish Adoption Board*) is to:

- 1) collect and maintain data on the legislation of foreign states concerning adoption and international adoption services and provide information about this on request to authorities and service providers;
- 2) follow the international development in inter-country adoption matters;
- 3) follow the implementation of the Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-country Adoption (*the Hague Convention*) in Finland and, if necessary, take measures for the implementation of it;
- 4) co-operate with the central authorities or the bodies taking care of the duties of a central authority in the states that are parties to the Hague Convention to achieve the objects of the Convention and to exchange the information referred to in the Convention;
- 5) approve for a fixed period those foreign service providers, referred to in section 21(3)

of the Adoption Act (153/1985), with which Finnish service providers may co-operate, and revoke earlier approvals;

6) grant the permissions for adoption referred to in section 25 of the Adoption Act;

7) provide the evidence referred to in section 44 of the Adoption Act and statements referred to in sections 45, 46, 47a(2) and 50(2), as well as the statements referred to in section 7(2) of the Adoption Decree (508/1997);

8) take care of those tasks of a central authority, referred to in the Hague Convention, which have not been delegated to any other body by Act, Decree or Decision of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health; and

9) submit initiatives and proposals to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health for the development of the inter-country adoption activity.

Section 2

If the Finnish Adoption Board has granted permission for adoption on the basis of sec-

tion 27(1) of the Adoption Act, the permission shall state that

- 1) the adopter has been deemed an appropriate and suitable adoptive parent; and
- 2) the adopter has received inter-country adoption service and adoption counselling.

If the Finnish Adoption Board has granted permission for adoption on the basis of section 27(2) of the Adoption Act, the permission shall state that

- 1) the foreign body has deemed the adopter an appropriate and suitable adoptive parent;
- 2) the adopter has received necessary counselling in his home state; and
- 3) according to the certificate presented by the adopter the child has the right or will get the right of entry and habitual residence in that state.

The permission referred to in subsections 1 and 2 above shall also state the period of validity of the permission as well as the possible conditions or restrictions on the adoption referred to in section 27(3) of the Adoption Act.

The permission referred to in subsections 1 and 2 above may, on the request of the adopter, be given in English.

Section 3

A permission granted on the basis of section 27 of the Adoption Act shall be sent directly to the service-provider from which the adopter has received the inter-country adoption service.

Section 4

The Board has a chairman, a vice-chairman and a necessary number of other members. Each member has personal deputy member.

Both the chairman and the vice-chairman shall represent the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. At least one of the other members shall represent the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one the Ministry of Justice and one the Directorate of Immigration. One member shall be an expert on municipal child welfare work and one an expert on social sector research and development. In addition, one

representative will be elected from each service provider which has been licensed to provide inter-country adoption service by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. What is provided above concerning members also apply to deputy members.

The majority of the members of the Board shall represent public authorities.

Section 5

The Council of State appoints the chairmen, the members and the deputy members for a five-year period at most. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health appoints the secretary to the Board.

The chairman or vice-chairman of the Board and at least half of the other members constitute a quorum.

However, in matters relating to granting of a permission referred to in section 1(6), the Finnish Adoption Board also constitutes a quorum in the presence of the chairman or the vice-chairman and the expert on municipal child welfare work and the member representing the expertise on social sector research and development.

Section 6

Otherwise the regulations on state committees are applied to the Board.

Where necessary, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health issues more detailed instructions to the Board.

Section 7

This Decree enters into force on July 1 1997.

This Decree repeals the earlier Decree (155/1985) on the Finnish Board of Inter-Country Adoption Affairs, issued on 8 February 1985 and later amendments.

When this Decree enters into force the appointed Board will continue its work until the end of its term. A member representing the Directorate of Immigration referred to in section 4 must, however, be appointed.

Measures for the implementation of this enters into force.
Decree may be undertaken before the Decree

Helsinki 30 May 1997

President of the Republic

MARTTI AHTISAARI

Minister of Justice *Kari Häkämies*

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